

# King County Youth & Family Services Association: What It Is & Why It Works

## **What is the King County Youth & Family Services Association?**

**The King County Youth & Family Services Association (YFSA)** is an association of organizations throughout King County focused on serving their local communities' specific needs of youth and families through professional counseling, education and other support services.

Established by King County policy and supported since 1972, the YFSA collectively blankets all of King County with a large range of specialized, prevention-to-intervention services.

### **All member organizations of the YFSA offer:**

- Effective, school-based services
- Youth and family support services
- Outreach and intervention services for youth with behavioral or emotional needs but not involved with the justice system but approach involvement—a group not typically served by programs outside of YFSA

In addition, each organization is locally based in its community with local leadership, deep community roots, and credibility as experts in their field.

## **What are the benefits of the YFSA?**

The associated relationships between the individual organizations create a synergy of services through which the YFSA as a whole offers:

- **Accessibility:** a full range of prevention and intervention services to youth & families throughout King County, covering both urban and rural communities
- **Efficiency:** ongoing communication and partnership means no duplication of services in any one area
- **Effectiveness:** services specifically tailored to the local communities' needs

### **How does this synergy work?**

- We have created countywide linkages through cross-referrals, leading to more effective interventions
- We can leverage local resources because of our local roots and relationships

### **How the YFSA benefits its members' clients:**

- We are deeply involved and called upon as experts within local community groups
- We work through the schools, reaching youth and families who may not otherwise be served
- We have highly trained staff who specialize in working with youth and families.
- We focus on local families and their specific needs, while still being able to flex to meet kids as their needs change.

## **If the YFSA didn't exist, what would be lost?**

- A vibrant network with a strong history of working together
- An efficient process to allocate funds to established local resources that provide regional coverage
- Unparalleled depth of local community-invested connection across the county
- Range/scope of early intervention services provided to county children and families
- Flexible responses to individual community needs